



From: Vastola, Jennie

Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2018 4:16 PM

Subject: RE: President Suite Remodel - Vice President of Finance & Administrative Services Response

***Sent on the behalf of Ron Ballesteros-Perez
Assistant Superintendent / Vice President
Finance & Administrative Services***

Palomar Campus Community –

I wanted to respond to the recent email sent out from Susan Snow in an effort to get information out to as many people as possible. Please see my responses under each paragraph.

In documents obtained from a California Public Records Act (CPRA) request, there are plans for a major remodel in the newly constructed library, also known as the Learning Resource Center (LRC). The plans show that a space slated for a Language Resource Center will be remodeled into a 2,253 square foot presidential suite. The estimated cost of this remodel is estimated at \$700,000 that was submitted to DSA for approval of architectural plans.

- Executive Assistant Office & Waiting Area 406 square feet
- Governing Board Sr. Executive Assist. 162 square feet
- Workroom 167 square feet
- President's Office 458 square feet
- Restroom 84 square feet
- Conference Room 945 square feet
- SPC, Policy & Procedures and Cabinet meetings to be relocated from AA-140 to the president's conference room

The public records request asked for all existing documents (paper and electronic) regarding the proposed presidential suite remodel. The District provided only five documents, including four architectural drawings and an application sent to the Division of the State Architect (DSA). The DSA application and two of the smaller architectural drawings are attached. The two larger drawings will not fit on an email.

- The District's Proposition M Construction Manager is currently out of the country in Germany. However, his staff was able to respond yesterday with additional information pertaining to a purchase order with our district architect (HMC) that they were previously unaware of.
- That information will be sent to PFF as part of the CPRA

After receiving only the five documents listed above, the District was reminded of their obligation to provide any and all documents pertaining to the remodel. The Superintendent/President asserts that the District has complied with the CPRA and these five documents are all that exist. Ostensibly, no contracts, internal or external written communications, minutes of any meetings pertaining to the remodel, etc. exist. Not only does it seem unlikely that there are only five documents pertaining to a project of this scope and magnitude, but we have concerns over the decision to build this presidential suite.

- Meeting minutes normally are not kept for remodels of this size (2,253 square feet)
- Communication for this project was done face-to-face and/or by telephone
- The District looked at a few options for relocating the president office suite since the current library would be closed down/fenced off.



- SSC Building and Human Resource Services Building
- Both areas are currently occupied
- No other areas with available with the required square footage needed
- Maintain current location
- Posed safety issues with vacant floors and restricting elevator access
- Superintendent has experienced safety issues at her current location
- Excessive utility cost for having HVAC for an entire building to accommodate the president office suite
- Thus, as the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services, my team and I made the recommendation to the president to move her and her staff to the Learning Resource Center (LRC)
- Any new Administration Building would have to be funded from a new facilities bond

The District provided architectural drawings from HMC Architects and has also stated that the Division of the State Architect (DSA) is reviewing plans. A check from Palomar College to the DSA in the amount of \$13,850 was issued for them to do so. The plans that the DSA are reviewing are a set of complete architectural drawings that would typically cost tens of thousands of dollars to produce. Despite the monetary transactions with HMC Architects and the DSA, the District's response to the public records request did not include any contracts, invoices, board documents, or anything else that would support this business activity.

- The architectural drawings are currently in for DSA review and approval on constructability.
- Once approved, a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be advertised allowing contractors to bid on the project
- Lowest, responsive, responsible bidder will win the award (normal practice for community colleges)
- Contract agenda item will be placed on a future Governing Board meeting for approval

Construction on the LRC seems to be complete since work crews are no longer in the area, however the faculty and staff have not begun relocating. With so little information provided by the District, it is difficult to figure out what is going on. In an email exchange, the president stated that the presidential suite has not yet been built. Yet the status of the LRC remains unclear to us. In the absence of public information, the college campus is left with only conjectures. One possibility is that the opening of the LRC may be delayed because of the intent to construct a presidential suite. Equally as puzzling is the fate of the Language Resource Center that would be displaced, and who was involved with the decision to spend money on a presidential suite at the expense of a student learning center. It seems unlikely that there was any public discussion since minutes from meetings were not included in the District's response.

- The LRC is delayed and that information was provided to the Vice President, Jack Kahn, Dean Pearl Ly
- President Dr. Blake met with the library faculty and staff to inform the remodel
- The Vice President of Instruction and Dean also informed the library faculty and staff
- The LRC is still under construction with various items needing attention.
- Major issue – ceiling support systems required additional work as it failed DSA safety inspection
- Minor issues – punch list items, exterior façade & landscaping, LEED documentation, close out documents
- DSA final inspection and certification
- This is needed to allow occupancy
- Furniture, Fixture and Equipment (FF&E) Installation
- September 10 – October 12
- AV and Computer Installation
- Will be completed once FF&E installation is complete
- Projected Occupancy/Move-in dates
- January 2 -23 2019



We filed the CPRA request after hearing numerous people comment on the president's \$300,000 bathroom. It was our hope that the information we would receive would answer some questions. However, now we have more questions including why would the District restrict our access to public information? Our trust that the Superintendent/President and the trustees are working ethically and transparently has been eroded and we have no confidence in this top-down, behind-closed-doors style of management.

- Lastly, the District continues to be forthcoming with information on all construction projects
- Transparency is the utmost importance to the District as we move forward to build a better campus for faculty, staff and students

Sincerely,

Ron Ballesteros-Perez
Assistant Superintendent/Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services